



Picture Your Parks



A Publication of the City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division
A DIVISION OF PUBLIC WORKS

SUMMER 2020



Thank You Eugene!
YOUR PARKS & REC
BOND AND LEVY
DOLLARS AT WORK

Downtown Riverfront Park

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DIGGING INTO THE BOND AND LEVY PROJECTS

Anticipation isn't the only thing building this summer. With several of our 2018 Parks and Recreation Bond and Levy projects including the Downtown Riverfront Park moving into the construction phase, we are excited to welcome the summer months.

In addition, Parks staff has increased custodial services, restored park horticultural and tree care practices, upgraded inefficient irrigation systems, and added park benches, trash cans and lighting. We've built better trails, enhanced natural areas and are developing new parks while restoring old ones.

Families are already enjoying the first completed bond project at Tugman Park, a brand-new playground that opened in September 2019.

We have a more robust park safety program with dedicated police officers patrolling parks and year-round park ambassadors.

The progress in Parks has been mirrored in Recreation where they are addressing the needs of several aging facilities. Two major renovations, Campbell Community Center and Echo Hollow Pool & Fitness Center, are well underway with Sheldon Pool & Fitness Center not far behind.

In a short time, your vote of confidence in our Parks and Recreation programs is already making Eugene a cleaner, greener and safer community.

LOOK INSIDE:
GET A CLOSER LOOK AT
WHAT'S COMING TO
YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
WITH OUR BOND PROJECT
MAP. PG 4-5

New parks, trails, pool renovations and more coming soon.

City of Eugene Public Works
Parks and Open Space
1820 Roosevelt Boulevard
Eugene, Oregon 97402

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Just a few months ago, we never could have imagined the ways in which local parks have provided refuge and solace for thousands of people in our community working to get through this historic time.

Parks have supported the physical and mental health of our community in the midst of a global crisis. They were designated as temporary shelter-in-place locations for our community's unhoused. Parks also provided a gathering place for peacefully exercising free speech.

We believe that parks are for everyone. Parks and Open Space remains committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for all, while working to increase equity through access to quality parks.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been incredibly fortunate to continue to have access to our amazing Eugene park system. But Eugene's parks have also been under enormous strain.

Since the beginning of this health crisis, the park system has seen a tremendous increase in garbage, graffiti and vandalism. Simultaneously, the number of people using our parks has risen significantly and we had to implement additional safety measures throughout our work environment. All of these factors have led to a challenging situation with more and more resources needed in order to maintain the system. Despite these difficulties, Parks staff have pushed through and continue to provide essential services to the community.

Park staff have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic from day one -- and will continue to be in the months and years to come. We are adaptively managing ever-changing scenarios to make sure your parks remain open and functioning well. I'd like to thank the community for doing your part to keep the parks safe and healthy for all. And I'd like to especially thank all of the Eugene Park professionals who continue to work to help keep our parks clean, green, and safe for all to enjoy. Your work is truly essential to community health and wellbeing.

Respectfully,
Craig Carnagey, Parks and Open Space Director

Across the Bridge was called home by the African American community of Eugene, as well as white working-class families and migrant laborers. Photo by The Eugene Guard, Thursday July 14, 1949.



TELLING THE STORY OF EUGENE'S BLACK COMMUNITY

While construction continues on Eugene's new Downtown Riverfront Park, staff is working behind the scenes with artists to design and fabricate interpretive art pieces for the park that tell the story of Eugene. One of these pieces will be a multi-level drinking fountain featuring the history and photographs of the Across the Bridge Community, formerly located in Alton Baker Park.

The Across the Bridge Community was home to most of Eugene's black residents for several decades as they were not allowed to reside within the city limits. It was a rich and vibrant community and home to generations of families. In the late 1950's the community was razed to make room for the construction of today's Ferry Street Bridge and those families were forced to disperse to other areas outside the city.

To develop the specific wording and photos for the fountain, our design team worked with a focus group of black elders, historians and community members (pictured) to document stories about the realities of being black in Eugene. Eugene's history of racism and black relations is a difficult story to hear and tell. The new drinking fountain endeavors to reveal this past and an inclusive vision for our future together.



Linda Hamilton and Deloris Wilson

CAPRA ACCREDITATION WIN



In September 2019, Eugene joined the ranks of elite park and recreation agencies across the country by earning accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). CAPRA accreditation is the only national accreditation for park and recreation agencies and is a measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management and service to the community.

EUGENE PARKS FOUNDATION

The Eugene Parks Foundation (EPF) brings financial support and public advocacy to Eugene's parks, natural areas and recreation services to enhance the quality of our park system and ensure accessibility. EPF believes physical challenges and economic struggles should never be a barrier to the enjoyment of our parks and recreation services. Learn more about EPF and how to get involved at eugeneparksfoundation.org.

PARK SURVEY

How are we doing? Please take our parks satisfaction survey by July 16 and enter to win a \$100 gift card to REI. Take the survey at eugparks2020.com or look for Little Red at a park near you.



OUR RESPONSE DURING THE PANDEMIC



At the start of the pandemic, three important things happened:

- 1** A tremendous increase in park and natural area usage as community members sought the physical and mental health benefits these outdoor spaces provide.
- 2** The City suspended the no camping rules in parks in order to help flatten the curve and helped people to shelter in place.
- 3** We were faced with the challenge of doing our work while maintaining physical distancing in order to keep staff safe.



Our response included:

- In order to reduce crowded crew rooms, we went down to essential services with staff on a reduced and a rotating schedule.
- All staff who could work remotely were allowed to do so.
- We quickly assessed our protective gear such as masks and hand sanitizer and worked to obtain more as needed.
- Essential services started with garbage removal, cleaning, limited mowing, homeless outreach and illicit activity response.
- We closed play areas at the direction of the Governor and put up social distancing signage.
- Like you, we instantly learned and began using remote meeting tools.
- We placed portable restrooms at parks that were easier to keep clean.
- We placed hand washing stations in parks as well.
- We began providing outreach to homeless people in parks in the form of health screenings, sharing social service and COVID-19 information, providing food, and picking up trash.
- In partnership with our Eugene Police park resource officers, we responded to a significant uptick in vandalism and other illicit activity across the system.
- We safely kept vital projects moving forward like the Downtown Riverfront Park Project in order to lessen local economic impact and address priority park projects.

Parks has been prioritizing safety under the “Stay Home, Save Lives” order, but reducing our operations and pressing pause on volunteer events coincided with increased park use and spring growth spurts in our green spaces. Parks and green infrastructure maintenance is back to regular staffing levels but things may look different while we catch up from the months of shelter-in-place. Moving forward we take with us all we learned about each other, how we can work differently and the role we play in the community’s wellbeing.



Responsible Outdoor Recreation

For the latest COVID-19 health guidelines and park closures, visit eugene-or.gov/coronavirus.



Stay 6 feet from others including on paths and trails.

Visit parks at less popular times.

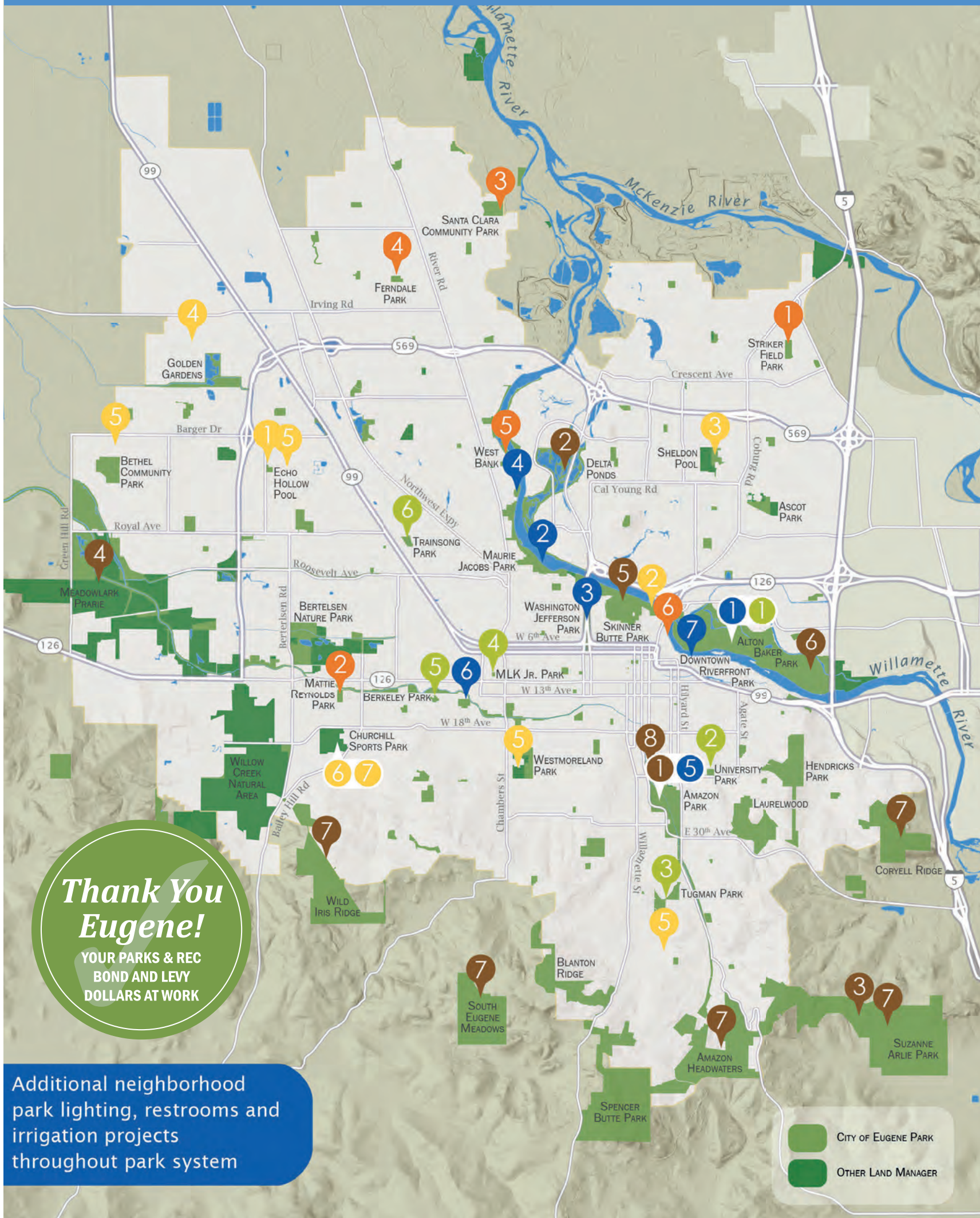
Go solo or with your household.

Follow Lane County and CDC health guidelines.

If you're sick, stay home.



BOND PROJECTS



Stay up to date at eugparksandrec.org

BOND PROJECT PROGRESS CHART		Planning	Design	Construction	Complete	Expected Completion
New Park Development	1. Striker Field					2021
	2. Mattie Reynolds Park					2025
	3. Santa Clara Community Park (Phase 1)					2022/23
	4. Ferndale Park					2023
	5. West Bank Park					2026
	6. Downtown Riverfront Park					2021
Park Renovation Projects	1. Alton Baker Park					2026
	2. University Park					2023
	3. Tugman Park Phase 1				✓	Done
	4. Tugman Park Phase 2					2024
	5. Martin Luther King Jr. Park					2024
	6. Berkeley Park					2021
	7. Trainsong Park					2026
Recreation Facilities	1. Echo Hollow Pool renovation					2021
	2. Campbell Community Center renovation					2020
	3. Sheldon Pool renovation					2022
	4. Sports Complex Phase 1 (Phase 1)					2025
School Districts Partnerships	5. Artificial Turf replacement					TBD
	6. Churchill Tennis Court					TBD
	7. Churchill YSP /Community Center planning					TBD
Trail and Habitat Projects	1. Amazon Park Running Trail renovation					2020
	2. Delta Ponds Loop Trail completion (bridge)					2021
	3. Suzanne Arlie Park Ridgeline Trail & Access					2022
	4. West Eugene Wetlands Habitat restoration					2023
	5. Skinner Butte Park Habitat restoration					2021
	6. Whilamut Natural Area habitat restoration					2026
	7. Ridgeline Habitat restoration					2024
	8. Amazon Creek restoration					2021
Safety/Lighting Improvements	1. Alton Baker Park lighting					2021
	2. Maurie Jacobs Park lighting					2022
	3. Washington Jefferson lighting					2022
	4. West Bank Path lighting					2020
	5. Amazon Park Path lighting					2023
	6. Fern Ridge Path lighting					2022
	7. South Bank Path lighting					2021
	Neighborhood Park lighting					2023
Infrastructure	Repair and Improve Restrooms					2025
	Repair and Improve Irrigation					2023



LEVY SERVICES

Operations and Maintenance Levy Progress

Park Safety

- ✓ Added two year-round Eugene Police Officers dedicated to patrolling parks
- ✓ Added two year-round and two seasonal Park Ambassadors
- ✓ Expanded Illegal Camp Response Team to provide daily clean-up operations
- ✓ Increased graffiti removal response from monthly to weekly

Park Maintenance:

- ✓ Reopened closed restrooms
- ✓ Visiting more parks daily for increased custodial services during summer
- ✓ Increased mowing frequency
- ✓ Added preventative tree maintenance in developed parks
- ✓ Added preventative maintenance of irrigation, lighting and park furnishings
- ✓ Added seasonal weekend and after-hours maintenance in high-use parks

Habitat and Natural Area Maintenance

- ✓ Increased seasonal trash service to several times a week at high use trailheads
- ✓ Added preventative maintenance of roads, parking areas, fences, signs and portable restrooms
- ✓ Continuing vegetation management to reduce fuel loads, manage weeds and add native plants
- ✓ Increased trail maintenance



Ridgeline trail maintenance

PROJECT ROUNDUP



2,021 for 2021*

With a tree-mendous response from the community, we have already exceeded our goal of planting 2,021 giant sequoias to help offset the carbon footprint associated with hosting the World Athletics Championships. Sequoias were planted in shared public areas such as parks and street medians, as well as in private spaces like schools, local businesses and private property. A big thank you to those who have contributed to the success of this project benefiting many generations to come.

*The World Athletics Championships have been rescheduled to 2022



Habitat Enhancement Projects Also Reduce Hazardous Fuels

In early 2020, Skinner Butte, Melvin Miller and Blanton Ridge parks were the focus of natural area improvement projects. These habitat enhancements help reduce hazardous fuel loads, improve habitat for native plants and animals, and increase opportunities for public access. Funding for these projects came from the Bureau of Land Management Community Wildfire Assistance Fund and Parks and Open Space capital funding.



Amazon Prairie Wetland Mitigation Bank

Acquired in 2019, a 329-acre parcel west of the Eugene Airport is set to become the new Amazon Prairie Wetland Mitigation Bank. Our vision for Amazon Prairie is a restored wetland prairie with a diversity of native plants and shallow, seasonal pools supporting amphibians, pollinators and other wildlife. Although there is currently no public access to the site, in the long term, we intend to provide public access for recreation such as trails and nature interpretation.



Owen Rose Garden Path Improvements

Major paving improvements completed in May allow visitors with mobility challenges to better access and enjoy the full garden. Replacing the gravel path is a new concrete path looping around the garden, connecting the parking lot to the restroom and the riverfront path. Great care was taken when working around the State Heritage cherry tree, including a narrowed path.



Amazon Running Trail Reconstruction

The South Amazon Running Trail along both sides of the Amazon Creek from Hilyard Street to Frank Kinney Park, has been completely reconstructed. Hiding under a fresh cover of bark is the new rock base that will provide long-term stability and allow year-round use. This summer, we will begin work on the North Amazon Running Trail located in Amazon Park, completing the full Amazon Trail reconstruction. **The North Amazon Running Trail will be closed from mid-July through September for construction.**



Sladden Park Playground Renovation

This Whiteaker neighborhood park got a big makeover last year including new playground equipment, a sand play area with boulders and a water play table. Improved connections to the surrounding pathways also provide wheelchair access to the restroom and picnic areas, which now include accessible picnic tables.



Small Dog Area at Candlelight

A new area has been added to the Candlelight Dog Park for pint-sized pups. This section is intended to provide a safe and secure off-leash area for dogs 25 pounds and under. For more information on Eugene dog parks and doggie etiquette, visit eugene-or.gov/dogparks.

COMING SOON:

- RiverPlay Discovery Village resurfacing and equipment replacement (Summer 2020)
- New Mid-Elevation Loop Trail at Skinner Butte (Summer 2020)
- Lincoln School Park Renovation (2021)
- Upcoming Bond and Levy Projects on pages 4–5 and page 8



Helen Denzler (pictured) has been gardening at Alton Baker Community Garden for 13 years.



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT ON OUR COMMUNITY GARDENS

As COVID-19 spread throughout our country, many municipalities shut-down their community garden programs along with other public open spaces that were deemed non-essential. Here in Eugene we know many families depend upon their community garden plot as a source of fresh, safe and accessible local food. Thanks to a clear commitment from our growers to follow safety guidelines, gardens have remained open and continue to play an important role in addressing the food security needs of our community.

For the 300-plus individuals and households renting space at one of Parks' six community gardens, the gardens meet different needs. For many, it's about being able to provide for their families through having fresh vegetables at their fingertips. For others, the gardens are a safe place to connect with nature and get physical exercise.

"This year a lot more people are growing food," Mathews Community Garden site coordinator David Laker said.

Laker gave an example of one gardener growing an entire plot of just collards. Retirees, children and gardeners from around the world can be found on any given day growing together and helping each other out.

"Gardening is a tool that teaches us how to take care of our own beings," Laker said. He also credits the gardens for being a place where we learn to take care of each other too.

Surely one of our longest-growing gardeners is Alice Aikens who has rented a plot at the Amazon Community Garden since the early '80s and started her tenure as a site coordinator only a few years later. Aikens grows a little of everything, but her joy is in sharing the abundance of the garden. Aikens says she often gets more satisfaction from giving away the products of her garden than keeping them for herself.

"Gardening," she said, "is one of those endeavors where you can experience a lot of satisfaction and learn a lot about plants at the same time."

Learn more about our community garden program at eugene-or.gov/communitygardens.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers have always been a huge part of what makes our parks shine. While we continue to adapt our Parks Volunteer Program to meet existing needs and restrictions, we want to give a big thank you to everyone who put on a pair of gloves, muck boots and a few extra layers to come out and volunteer with us at more than 500 events in 2019. To learn more about our volunteers' successes, check out our 2019 Volunteer Impact Report at eugene-or.gov/parkvolunteer

Our volunteer program will be stronger than ever in 2020, thanks to your continued support. Visit our volunteer calendar online to stay up to date on scheduled events and cancellations.



BOND PROJECTS IN PROGRESS



Berkeley Park

This southwest Eugene neighborhood park is scheduled for a complete renovation to begin in 2021. A community engagement process was completed in 2019 that prioritized a larger playground, sand and nature play, an irrigated lawn and looped walking path.



Campbell Community Center Renovation

Early site development and excavation started in February for an expansion and renovation of the second oldest senior center on the west coast. The foundation has been set, expanding the original footprint by 50 percent, and walls are going up fast. This project is on schedule to be completed in the fall of this year.



Delta Ponds Loop Trail Completion

The City has been awarded a \$350,000 grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department to complete the Delta Ponds Loop trail. This grant provides an excellent opportunity to leverage existing funding from the bond to increase recreational access to our urban natural areas. Construction on the trail connection will complete this one-mile loop and is scheduled to begin in 2021.

Downtown Riverfront Park



After many years of visioning and planning, construction on this legacy park project is underway and on track to be completed in late spring of 2021.

Site preparation began last year with the demolition of buildings, mass grading, removal of soil to make the riverbank less steep, and re-vegetation of the rocky bank with more than 24,000 plants. We are already seeing these plants in bloom along the river's edge.

The 3-acre park will be urban in character balanced with riverbank and habitat enhancements. Construction work over the next year will include creating spaces for broad river views, new bicycle and pedestrian paths, seating and overlooks. The park's design, which included input from thousands of community members, integrates interpretive art pieces telling the stories of ecology, industry and community, past and present, creating a park experience that's truly all about Eugene.

The adjacent 1-acre park plaza, to the west of the riverfront park, is scheduled for additional design work and construction to be completed in conjunction with building development in the new neighborhood.

“This project will be a public outdoor space like no other in Eugene. The ability to come down to the park and look out over this beautiful river that's shaped our community will create a destination and connection to our past and future for community members and visitors alike.”

— Emily Proudfoot, project manager



Echo Hollow Pool & Fitness Center Renovation

With final designs that meet the increased demand for pool space for recreation and competitive swimmers, construction on Echo Hollow is underway. Swimmers can look forward to the completion of this project by March of 2021.



West Bank Path Lighting

The West Bank Path Renovation project will be constructed in 2020 and replace approximately one mile of the Ruth Bascom Path between Stephens Drive and Copping Street (funded by Pavement Bonds) with new lighting extending to Maurie Jacobs Park (funded by Parks and Recreation Bonds). The lighting system utilizes energy efficient LED technology designed to meet desires for lighted alternative transportation

routes between the River Road neighborhood and downtown with considerations for potential adverse impacts to habitat and wildlife.



Santa Clara Community Park

Santa Clara Park is a future 35-acre community park site currently comprised of two open fields with informal walking paths on the north and east sides of Madison Middle School. There's not much there right now but it's full of possibility. Opportunities for you to weigh in (pictured) will continue through the summer as we ask the community to envision the newest and largest park in Santa Clara. Construction is anticipated in 2022.



Striker Field Park

Final designs for this large, 8-acre park site include a large playground, court games (basketball, pickleball and petanque), restrooms, picnic shelter and informal amphitheater for community gatherings. The park is currently on schedule for construction to begin summer 2021.



Suzanne Arlie Park Ridgeline Trail & Access

Suzanne Arlie Park is the largest park in Eugene's system, consisting of 515 acres in southeast Eugene. The master plan has been completed and includes a network of interconnected trails for nature-based recreation, disc golf, programmed group-camping, a mountain bike skills park, and habitat conservation and restoration efforts which are already underway. The first phase of park development is bond funded and will include habitat enhancements, an extension of the Ridgeline trail and mountain bike trails. Construction is expected in 2022.

Stay up to date at eugparksandrec.org

Help keep our parks safe by reporting safety and maintenance concerns! Easy mobile reporting at eugene-or.gov/parkwatch.



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